



STAFF PHOTOS/KATHRYN KOCH

Razia's Ray of Hope Foundation founder Razia Jan accepts the inaugural Amazing Women Award from George Prebola, past president of the Duxbury Rotary Club and assistant governor-elect for District 7950 of Rotary International, along with Patti Quigley, the foundation's executive director.

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Duxbury Reporter ✓

An amazing woman

Razia Jan receives inaugural award for her efforts through Razia's Ray of Hope Foundation



Razia's Ray of Hope Foundation's Razia Jan, far left, catches up with friends and supporters Sunday at the Duxbury Senior Center before she's presented with the Inaugural Amazing Women Award.

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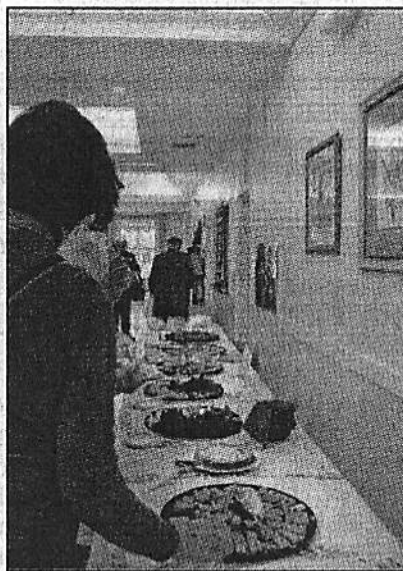
DUXBURY – When Razia Jan returns to town, she returns to a community she describes as the backbone of her efforts to build the Zabuli Education Center for Women and Girls, the mission of which is to educate young women in her home country of Afghanistan.

It's a return that becomes very emotional and brings tears of joy to her eyes. At the Duxbury Senior Center Sunday, during a reception sponsored by the Duxbury Rotary Club, she looks back on the evolution of her efforts to help the people of Afghanistan.

"It's a journey, and we are in the middle," she said. "I am so proud the last three years to have the school going."

The journey started 10 years ago because of the Sept terrorist attacks, when, as owner of a small tailoring business in Duxbury, she sent more than 400 homemade blankets to rescue workers at Ground Zero. From there, she would go on to send care packages to U.S. troops in Afghanistan, coordinate Operation Shoe Fly, delivering more than 30,000 pairs of shoes to Afghan children, and raising the money to build the Zabuli center in Kabul.

Her Razia's Ray of Hope Foundation,



Tea, coffee and Afghan desserts were enjoyed by all at the Duxbury Senior Center Sunday as the Duxbury Rotary Club sponsored a gathering with Zabuli Education Center founder Razia Jan.

which is dedicated to improving the lives of women and children in Afghanistan through community-based education, continues to work toward the day when the girls who attend the center are able to attend college and enter teaching pro-

grams.

Jan said there's a lot of hope for the future, as 300 girls are expected to attend the education center this year. Of those, 60 are new kindergarten students. She's already thinking ahead five years, when the first class graduates. This brings her joy.

"We have hope," she said.

Jan said she has received so much support, with so many people involved, and owes a great deal of her success, and hopefully continued success, to the people of Duxbury.

"I think it's amazing," she said. "We have so many people with support. Duxbury has been the backbone of my organization, the backbone for my success."

For Patti Quigley, executive director of Razia's Ray of Hope Foundation, whose husband, Patrick, was killed Sept. 11, it's an honor to serve as Razia's eyes and ears in the United States as Jan reports from Kabul.

As administrator, recordkeeper and fundraiser, Quigley, who met Jan in 2002, focuses on the foundation's work in the U.S. but hopes to visit the Zabuli Center this year. She's pleased to report that

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STAFF PHOTOS/KATHRYN KOCH

Razia's Ray of Hope Foundation continued its fundraising efforts Sunday with the sale of authentic Afghan wares at the Duxbury Senior Center.

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enough money has already been raised to cover all expenses for the coming year.

"That's my goal this year: to get there," she said. "I would love to see it and meet the girls."

Quigley said Jan takes the opportunity when she returns to the United States to attend Rotary gatherings, Girl Scout meetings and other events to talk about the progress at the school. Between March 2 and 11, she'll have attended gatherings in Duxbury, Marshfield, Concord, Rockport, Sharon, Hull, Wellesley and Clifton, N.Y.

Jan moved back to Afghanistan in October 2008 and returns to the U.S. a few weeks in the spring and again in the fall. In addition to her work with Razia's Ray of Hope, Jan works in Afghanistan as country program director for the non-profit Arzu, Inc., developing and managing aid projects for Afghan rug weavers and their families.

A video was shown at the senior center Sunday that featured images of girls at the education center. While he may be in the minority among his countrymen, a father of two of the girls shared his thoughts on the education the girls are receiving.



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"As my children study, their future becomes bright," he said.

In a country as unstable as Afghanistan, Jan faces the risk of being blown up at a neighborhood market, a fate she knows she has narrowly missed at least once. In spite of the instability, or because of it, she feels she can't leave. She must stay for the girls. She said every effort is made to protect them and everyone who works at the center.

"It gives me such good satisfaction," she said. "We work really hard so every day is safe for them."

For her efforts, Jan was the recipient Sunday of the inaugural Amazing Women Award presented to her by George Prebola, past president of the Duxbury Rotary Club and assistant governor-elect for District 7950 of the international service organization.

The award will be presented each year to a woman who helps Afghanistan move forward. Jan described the honor as "amazing" and thanked the Duxbury Rotary

Club for its support.

Prebola said Jan's many accomplishments are in line with the goals of Rotary Club International.

"Our motto is 'service above self,' and nobody embodies this more than Razia Jan," he said.



Razia Jan updates friends and supporters of Razia's Ray of Hope Foundation and the Zabuli Education Center Sunday at the Duxbury Senior Center about the progress made at the school for Afghan girls in Kabul, Afghanistan.